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Title:

Statement - State Aid to Private Schools

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STATEMENT BY THE HON. DON DUNSTAN, Q.C., M.P., LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION.

The Labor Party has specifically said in relation to assistance to private schools that it will not reduce any present per capita grants or benefits given to private schools. We stated that we would agree with the representatives of private schools, the needs basis upon which grants to private schools will be given in addition to present grants to ensure that children who are not getting education to the standard provided in state schools are brought up to that standard with the limited funds available for education. It is wrong in our view for the State to continue to subsidise inequalities in education.

I was interviewed by Mr. Pridham and a representative of the Southern Cross. At that interview I was specifically asked whether the South Australian Labor Party agreed with the view published by the Victorian Labor Party Executive that private schools assistance would be phased out. I stated quite clearly to Mr. Pridham that that was not Labor Party policy, that it was not the policy in this State, that I would not have been on the platform with Mr. Holding when he made his policy speech if a statement of that kind had been made. I was asked if I could be quoted and I said "yes" and now Mr. Pridham subscribes to the following statement issued on his behalf:

"The phasing out of private schools is the stated intention of the Victorian A.L.P. If this is not the general intention of the Labor Party, why has this not been denied by Mr. Dunstan who is a member of the A.L.P. Federal Executive."

I am not a member of the Federal Executive of the Labor Party, but I did deny that it was the intention of the South Australian Labor Party to reduce, in any way, assistance to non-Government schools. Mr. Pridham knows this and one would have thought that in the case of a representative of a body of parents concerned with Christian education one could expect truth and honesty.

20/5/70.